

Request for Concept Notes for the Evaluations of BHA's COVID-19 Response

FAQ

Q1. Is the request for a single concept note to cover both evaluations or two separate concept notes?

Please submit only one concept note.

Q2. Can the proposed research team submit additional documentation showing past performance of previous evaluations/expertise?

Yes, the team can submit additional documentation, as attachments or appendices to the concept note.

Q3. Is the workplan presented in Gantt chart format included in the 6 page CN limit?

Yes

Q4. How long is the co-creation process expected to take, and is this considered a phase prior to the inception planning?

We expect the co-creation of the evaluation design to take 2-3 months after evaluation team selection.

Q5. On page 4 of the call, it reads "1. A portfolio-level evaluation of BHA's ESF Response". This statement omits Title II. Should this read "BHA's ESF and Title II Response"?

Title II awards are excluded from the scope of these evaluations.

Q6. On page 5 of the call, under **A. Scope of the COVID-19 Thematic Evaluation**, there is a statement "The Thematic Evaluation may consider all ARP-funded COVID-19 supplemental awards made between March 13, 2020, ..." However, the ARP was passed in March 2021. So, should the "March 13, 2020" read as March 13, 2021?

The intent is that the thematic evaluation is not limited to ARP-funded awards and can explore themes across all of BHA's COVID-19 response.

Q7. On page 11/and Table 2 of the call, it states the inception planning and inception report will be submitted 1 month after the award start, but this does not allow the necessary time for contracting/sub-contracting plus a co-creation process to take place before inception plans are made.

Deadlines in Table 2 are illustrative and will be clarified upon evaluation team selection. The 2–3 month co-creation period referenced in Q1 will overlap with inception planning.

Q8. On page 11 of the call, it is stated that the thematic evaluation(s) will inform the performance evaluation. Will BHA consider the possibility of the performance evaluation informing the thematic studies, e.g., if this is agreed during co-creation?

The sequencing of performance and thematic evaluations is flexible. BHA encourages applicants to propose an approach that will meet the evaluation objectives.

Q9. Is it acceptable for a core team to be presented, but to also include in the budget additional general research staff support with team members unnamed at this time?

Yes, this is fine.

Q10. Only \$1.1 million offered to evaluate \$1.3 billion in government program funding that went to 46 countries. Would there be an interest in picking a few target countries, say one example from each region, to focus on?

LASER acknowledges the funding question, and there will be room to discuss, refine, and co-create the scope of work during a co-creation phase, should your concept note move forward. Picking targeted countries in each region for the primary data collection and other related issues can be discussed during the co-creation phase.

Q11. Should the budget be prepared by pre-awards?

Please prepare a detailed budget and it will be reviewed by our pre-award team should your concept note move forward.

Q12. Should the budget include indirect cost? What rate?

Yes, budget should include indirect cost. The indirect rate should be budgeted using the Applicant's approved negotiated indirect cost rate. If no rate exists, it should be budgeted at 10% in accordance with USAID guidance 2 CFR, Subpart E, Section 200.414 which any non-Federal entity who have never received a negotiated indirect cost rate to charge a de minimis rate of 10%.

Q13. Does the entire \$1.1M go to the project team, or will LASER take a portion off the top? If so, how much?

This amount is the amount going towards a research team. The estimated costs for LASER project management have already been determined and removed from the total available so \$1.1M is the research team only.

Q14. Will this evaluation award be under the larger LASER award, in other words, Laser/Purdue will be the prime?

Yes, LASER PULSE is the agreement in which this buy-in is possible as it is a buy-in to the main cooperative agreement. Purdue University is the Prime.

Q15. Is a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) required for the main applicant of this bid?

We do not mandate a NICRA; it should be your institution's NICRA unless waived. But a waiver is the decision of the Applicant and not necessary for our purposes. However, if an institution does not have an approved NICRA, you may use the de minimis of 10%.